1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

most important festival is the potlatch. This occasion is ideally a presentation of food by the members of one matrilineal moiety to those of the other and is designed to honor the memory of one or more deceased members of the hosts' side. The "Wolf party" observed in 1945, however, included guests belonging to both moieties and was organized and financed by a Crow man and his Wolf daughters. A few days after the Wolf party, Louis Mann apologized, explaining that he was "a little crazy" the day of the potlatch when he had let both moieties eat. He blamed his confusion on having been intoxicated the morning of the festival. His apology indicated that people had commented on the mixing, regarding it as incorrect. Louis stated that the subsequent Crow party would not be mixed. His promise was partly fulfilled, in that eating was limited to adult guests of the Wolf side, but children belonging to both moieties were served. Prior to 1945, the last potlatch in the Kaska area is reported to have taken place at McDame Creek around 1930.

Ideally a potlatch is organized by a deceased person's brothers or maternal uncles. Manifestly, however, fathers, daughters, and husbands were observed to organize these parties. The male organizers undertake the task of securing the food to be eaten, while sisters and female parallel cousins cooperate in the cooking and serving. The Wolf party, which was designed to honor the memory of Mrs. River Joe who had died nine months previously, was directed by River Joe and his son-in-law, Louis Mann (both Crow), while the food preparation was under the control of Joe's several Wolf daughters and their parallel cousins. This potlatch, like the following Crow party, was celebrated in Louis Mann's large home. Financial support was contributed by a majority of the members of the Wolf side, about $120 being collected. The functions of the party, as stated by River Joe, were to "help" the deceased, to have "fun," and to "Make good time for [in memory of] my mistress." A chronological record of events marking the first potlatch of 1945 is given below.

6/11/45. In the presence of River Joe, Old Man explained that there might be a potlatch in memory of River Joe's wife who died last October. He explained that Skipper or the latter's brother could "make" such a potlatch, because they belonged to the dead woman's side.

7/11/45. River Joe went to Trutch Lake in order to fetch his daughter and the latter's Take Indian husband.

7/13/45. River Joe returned from Trutch Lake in his son-in-law's truck. He was fond with the idea of giving a "potlatch party" for his wife but quite resented the notion that this would be an old fashioned procedure, pointing out that at Trutch village the Indians all observed this custom.

7/16/45. River Joe and his son-in-law, Louis Mann and the Take youth, went to the Hudson's Bay Company with the latter's truck. There they bought a large quantity of food and piled it in the back of the vehicle which then proceeded to Louis' home where the cooking would be done. River Joe announced he would collect money from the members of his wife's side who were camping across the river.

7/17/45. Today River Joe's daughters cooked and baked for the Wolf party tomorrow. River Joe said that his daughters were giving the potlatch for their mother, but that he had also contributed fifteen dollars to the expenses. "My boss that party. Bye and bye somebody boss his mistress. He boss for him." He agreed that the decision for a potlatch was (could be?) in the hands of the widower. Louis Mann indicated that the potlatch might last for six days and refused to consider the possibility of the police blocking it as a result of the meningitis quarantine attendant to the reserve where his house is located.

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box, while two men supported the lower portion. The top poles were pulled free. The men at the upper end of the pit ordered the lower end to be lowered as far as possible whereupon he let his own end drop into the grave, the length and width of which barely accommodated the coffin. The rope was then pulled up. Old Man, removing two mittens, knelt down and tossed a handful of earth on top of the coffin. Mrs. Man and Lady Sam followed suit, but without removing their mittens. Harry and Hans then began to shovel dirt into the grave and the other people started returning to the settlement. During the digging of the grave only Lady Sam was tense and mute. The other people, including the working men, chatted of many things without any show of constraint.

Mourning by closely related kin may continue for several months, mourning being a time when a woman will feel particularly sad and apt to cry. In time the intensity of mourning wears off. It is, however, often promoted when women are intoxicated, weeping or even sobbing for long deceased children being a characteristic feature of women's drinking.

Sometime after the interment of the deceased, the clothing worn by the individual at the time of death is burned. Any other possessions, such as packsacks and blankets, which are worn out or old and not desired by relatives as mementoes, are also destroyed. Other possessions, like guns, kits, axes, and snowshoes are distributed to relatives and friends. Good quality blankets and sidebridles, after being kept out of use for a time, are thoroughly washed with soap and water and stored for future use by members of the deceased person's family. Certain decorative possessions, such as fancy moccasins or an ornamented dog harness, are kept as mementos by a surviving parent, a spouse, or child. A woman may also keep her dead mother's tanning tools. Old Man reported that he could never leave his present home for if he started to "move around" he would lose clothing and other objects that had been associated with his dead son and to which he wanted to hold on. He still used his deceased daughter's silver plated cup, referring to it as "the ghost cup." The dwelling in which the person died remains uninhabited for a week or two and is then reoccupied. Sometimes a tent frame or tent is permanently abandoned following death.

Following the death of a husband or wife, young children may be raised by the surviving spouse or given in adoption. A man will generally entrust the care of his children to his mother-in-law. When Mary Wiley's husband died in the spring of 1941, the latter's brother, Edward Coon, took the widow to his trap line. Old Man explained that Edward did not want his sister-in-law to "run around" too soon after her husband's death. It is felt that a widow should wait at least a year before seeking new attachments. Following the death of her husband, a woman retains his name until she remarries.

As participants of the Roman Catholic Church, most of the Kaska have been taught to pray for the dead. Such prayers, however, are rarely said outside of church services. Following the burial of the body, there is little tendency to revisit the graveyard. In the fall of 1941, River Joe asked his son-in-law, Louis Moon, to construct a fence around the plot where Joe's wife and Louis' baby were buried. Following the completion of the fence, he placed a purchased gravestone over his wife's grave. A few days before this occasion Joe accompanied his son-in-law to Old Knee's place, where the men of the Upper Liard Indians were temporarily staying, and invited them to share a brew. There would be a "little party," he explained, to celebrate the erection of the stone and the completion of the graveyard fence. A

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765 few people braved the autumn rains to go the ten miles. Ideally, about one year after a
764 person's death, a memorial potlatch should be celebrated by the members of the society to which the deceased belonged. The deceased is remembered for about two generations.

CONCLUSIONS

182 In this section we propose to evaluate the manner in which the Kaska secure their goal of interpersonal adjustment. In contrast to the technical culture, where the effectiveness of behavior was judged by the maintenance of life and human efficiency in the physical environment, a sharply defined comparable statement for the social culture is not easy to formulate. Tentatively it may be suggested that the adjustive behaviors of any society can be evaluated from their operation in imposing adequate control on the expression of interpersonal hostility (deference), keeping at a minimum seriously conflicting attitudes and behaviors (consistency),* and insuring sufficient morale to keep the members of the group together and satisfied (stability). It also seems impossible to consider adjustment without some reference to the goals of adaptation, whose achievement is influenced by various aspects of the social culture.

Before going on to examine how well the Kaska manage to meet these minimum standards of adjustment, we will briefly review the over-all quality of Kaska social structure and interpersonal relationships. Kaska social culture may be understood once it is realized that the Indians conceive of interpersonal adjustment onomastically, that is, as lying in the avoidance of as many intense and close human relationships as possible. Somewhat paradoxically (at least from a western point of view), it may be said that the Kaska pattern interpersonal adjustment in terms of interpersonal avoidance or, at least, restraint. In social life this note is correlated with an absence of rigid social organization and of devices for securing wide group identification, cooperation, and unity. The pattern is reflected in the kinship system which, as was pointed out, is not important in regulating interpersonal behavior far beyond the nuclear family. Beyond the household, interpersonal relations tend to occur between individuals rather than between relatives whose statuses and roles are symbolically, sharply defined. Such a kinship structure is consistent with a society in which the frequency of social interaction is low for the greater part of the year. If, however, unrelated persons do enter close association with ego, kinship terms are usually quickly applied in order that, one infers, ego may more assuredly anticipate the results of his behavior on another as well as the nature of the behavior to which he will in turn be subject. The social atomism of Kaska life is further revealed in the relative unimportance of the society and is also connoted by the nature of the marriage contract, which primarily involves only two, or at the most three, people. Since marriage is not important for joining family groups, we find no tendency to elaborate the event; in fact, no crisis points in the life cycle are ceremonially elaborated. One of the functions of ceremonial elaboration would seem to be the subordination of the individual's role in an event to the social group whose symbolically expressed recognition is regarded as essential. In Kaska society little note is taken of transitions made along the life gradient. Finally we may consider the demonstration of atomism by the absence of

* Benedict has stressed continuity between points of the life cycle but we are now extending such consistency to other aspects of social life. See Benedict, Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning (1938).

sharply along them as if blowing something away. At 764
the same time he prayed, "May these children be healthy 783
and strong. May they never be sick". It is said this ceremony was for the purpose of removing (gathering together and then blowing away) all evil from the children.

A peculiar custom in vogue was as follows: 765*
If the deceased was a child and the mother wanted to 775
have it reborn by herself, she had a string tied around her waist, the other end of which was attached to the hand or foot or sometimes other part of the corpse. Brush (balsam twigs or any kind of brush) was spread to the hole in the lodge (through which the body was removed) and the string from the corpse passed along the brush. A number of pointers, consisting of short sticks were erected along this path with their ends leaning in the direction of where the mother was. These were to help the soul or ghost to follow in the desired direction. Corpses were generally burned in the day [764]
time. Part of the string would burn up during the night or early morning. The woman's husband now cut the string close to his wife. The long part of the string was burned and the short part was allowed to remain attached to the woman for four days. It was then removed and burned. If the mother did not desire to have the child come back in herself, she might select a married daughter

765 775 for the purpose and, if she consented, the string was tied to her. Women sometimes desired that adult relatives who died should be reborn by them. Thus a married sister or other relative would desire to have a brother or a sister reborn by them. Strings were tied to them in the same way.

764 When a person was burned there were always some goods burned with him. If a man, he had some clothes, moccasins, kettles, weapons and food burned with him. It is believed that all these things were required by a man to use when travelling on the trail to the spirit land.

537 762 764 If the deceased was a wealthy man and possessed slaves one or more slaves were killed at his death. Their bodies were not burned but thrown away some distance or more often thrown in the river or in water. If the deceased had been a kind man and fond of his slaves he told the people before his death "Do not kill any of my slaves", and none were killed. They became the slaves of his heir.

If the man had been fond of his slaves and he thought they would not be treated very well by his heir, he requested that they should be liberated at his death, which was done.

764 762 No dogs were killed when their masters died, and there was no custom of relatives of a deceased

of them overlook lakes, streams and villages. Not all are in prominent or high places; some are to be met with on low or flat land, especially near trails. Many of the modern graves since burial came into vogue are surrounded by fences. A very few graves have short mortuary columns with or without carved totemic figures. These have probably been adopted from the Coast. Small dolls are to be seen in some grave-houses; some of these appear to have been bought from Whites. They may have been dolls of children buried there. 764

It was expected that on the third day (or about three days) after the burning of the corpse, numerous ghosts would come around to get the spirit of the deceased or to search for it. Therefore at this time a single eagle feather was hung at the top of each house door or doorway to keep them out. These feathers were kept hanging for two or three days. No rattles or strings of hoops were used to keep away ghosts. No juniper or other strong smelling plants or evergreens were burned or used in other ways to keep ghosts away. Places where corpses have lain or graves or depositaries of the dead were not swept with branches of the rose or other trees. 764 775

All close relatives of a deceased person cut their hair shortly after the death of the relative. From the time of the relative's death until the hair 765

765 is cut they frequently sing songs in which they mourn the death of the deceased. After the hair is cut they sing no more. The hair was cut by some at about level with the top of the shoulders. Others who did not have very long hair cut it across level with the lobes of the ears. The Tahltan narrate the origin of the custom of cutting the hair as a sign of mourning.

Widows lived apart from the people in little shelters or lodges a short distance away from the other houses. They blackened their faces so the tears could be seen when they cried. Formerly people cried a great 765 deal when a relative died. They cried very much althoug 775 they knew it was not right to do this. Crying made the trail wet and slippery and difficult of travel. For this reason souls did not desire much crying. Crying had the same effect as rain here on earth, which causes the creeks and rivers to swell and makes the ground wet and slippery. At the present day people say crying makes the steps slippery that the dead have to climb. 765 Nowadays people cry but little when a person dies. For the first two days of her isolation a widow had to continue lying on one side. She must not turn over. During this time she was covered entirely with a blanket and fasted. On the second day a woman of the opposite [L15] phratry brought her some food on a large flat stone. On the same stone was a number of small stones or peb-

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bles set all round. Each one of these pebbles represented a living relative and was called by name. The stone was left with the widow over night. During the night she prayed, "May my relatives be well, may they live long, may none of them be sick, etc." It is not clear even to informants whom the widow supplicated. Some say they think she prayed and talked to the dead or souls. Next morning the attending woman came and gathered the pebbles. She tied them up in a wrapping or in a sack and took them away buried them in a dry place underneath the roots of some tree. After this the woman ate the food. For a long time she ate each day off the flat stone. She was not allowed to eat fresh meat or fresh fish for one year. Then she commenced to eat fresh feet of game and paunches of caribou. She must not eat fresh bear meat for four years, excepting the feet, which she might eat a little sooner. These restrictions are now broken down. In referring to this my chief informant said, "Nowadays people are like dogs. They have no restrictions nor regulations about these matters and therefore they die off. Formerly when people observed these things they lived a long time and there were many people".

There was no custom of spitting out the first mouthfuls of food. No boughs of trees were used to keep off ghosts nor to wash with. There was no

765 custom of placing boughs with their tips in a certain direction. No breech clouts were used to prevent connection of ghosts. No strings or thongs were used around the wrists, ankles, etc., by widows and other bereaved relatives.

765 [615] 292 Each widow wore a robe which was tied in front for her by a woman of the opposite phratry. She must not take it off for one month. At the end of this time the woman came and untied the robe for her. After this she could do it herself. A woman of the opposite phratry made a necklace and belt for the widow and put them on her. The belt was always of leather. If it broke before the time arrived for taking it off, it was considered a very bad omen or unlucky. The necklace was made of thong and reached down to the abdomen. Attached to it were a number of pendants consisting of small flat stones which represented relatives. [615] The necklace and belt were used for four years and were at the end of this time taken off by a woman of the opposite phratry. It was not necessary that the same woman should perform all these services; often different women acted. Widows wore their widowhood belt and necklace the full time, even if in the meanwhile they had married. The belt and necklace were buried in the same manner as the stones already mentioned as placed on the dish with the widow's first meal.

meal. 000

A widow did not comb her hair for about one year more or less. The hair generally became matted and uncomfortable. For this reason some women used scratchers like those of pubescent girls. At the end of the year a woman of the opposite phratry washed and combed the widow's hair. The widow now washed herself, and afterwards wore same kind of clothes as other women. Her period of widowhood was now considered over. Until this time widows were prohibited from picking berries, and cutting up or even touching game animals and fish. 765 302 [615]

Widows and all close relatives of deceased persons did not dance or sing for a long time. 765

Very few restrictions were placed on widowers. Some fasted and lived apart from the people for a short time, never longer than six months. These observances were altogether optional and many never observed them. All widowers were prohibited from hunting for one year. This restriction was generally observed fully.

Any people who were close relatives of a deceased person might select to become special mourners. Usually men became special mourners for men and women for women, but some times the sexes were mixed. These people were called Ō'tcīng. One person always took the initiative and others of the same clan might join. All acted alike and performed like ceremonies irres-

765 pective of sex. If a man f.i. /sic/ chose to become O'tcing he told some one of the opposite phratry to cut his hair. After the corpse had been burned he went back to the house and became very sorrowful. Often others of the same clan, generally relatives, offered to join in his sorrow. All had their hair cut and dressed in robes which were fastened with leather belts around the waist. They ceased singing mourning songs and, /upon/ arising, became very active. They walked around much. They walked to the north and also to the east and addressed the Day Dawn, praying to be made lucky etc., as they desired. They had to be energetic and work a great deal. They must not walk slowly or work slowly. They fetched water, gathered, split and carried firewood for all the houses of the opposite phratry. They got up early in the morning and lighted all the camp fires. An O'tcing slept and rested as little as possible. He placed a pointed stick at his head so if he fell asleep it would prod him. Then he jumped up quickly and prayed, "May I always be able to wake up and get up thus quickly" and "May I always be able to rise early in the morning". He made pointed sticks and sat on them. When they pricked him he got up quickly and prayed, "May I always be able to arise thus quickly and may I never be lazy". He wiped his eyes with raven's feathers and prayed, "May I always

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be able to wake up early as the raven does".

These ceremonies were supposed to make persons energetic, good workers, early risers, etc., and help them to retain these qualities even in old age. They continued to be <u>ō'tqīng</u> for four days. They then discarded their special dress and afterwards acted like other people.

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Generally one year or a little over after a person's death, the nearest relative gives a feast at which all the debts of the deceased are paid off. Just previous to the paying off ceremony a deceased man's relatives and clan kin gathered together to discuss his succession and the disposal of his property etc. To the meeting, his property was brought and his wife had to be present. The nearest oldest relative took charge of the proceedings. He asked the unmarried men in order of their age and relationship who of them would take the widow, name, place, and house of the deceased. If one of them agreed, then the widow and the house were given to him and an entire half of the deceased's movable property became the mutual property of himself and the widow. The other half was divided among the deceased's relatives. On the man agreeing to take the widow, they were at once united, the half share of the property was handed to them and the widow took her place as his bed-mate the same night. In the event of no one

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304 infection. Subsequently, from time to time the hole might be enlarged. Nasal rings fashioned from the wide hollow ends of sheep horns remained restricted to women but septum plugs found favor with both sexes. A man also perforated the nasal septum. In the case of boys great secrecy shrouded the operation. People believed that infection would occur if a woman chanced to see the freshly made hole. A young girl carefully concealed her unhealed septum wound from an old woman.

302 Men extracted their facial hair by tweezing, an old man sometimes soliciting a boy to perform the task. Rubbing the hair with rendered bone marrow probably constituted adornment, and in summer people greased their faces. To lighten dark skin a mixture of pitch and shredded bark was applied over a period of several months. Face painting marked the potlatch dancers, and youths of both sexes painted the countenance for courting, the adornment somehow signifying that the person would soon be married. Girls and young women plaited the hair in two or three braids that hung down over the back. Where the braid began a woman tied a painted band of thin, smoked sheepskin. No woman ever coiled her hair over the ears or put it up in a bun behind her head. Men let their hair hang long and unbraided.[13] Combs of jack pine or balsam brush [765] were used and sometimes also the backbone of a fish. Death of a close relative demanded that the hair of both sexes be cut.

304 Boys and girls sought to be tattooed when about ten years old. The operator usually consisted of an older youth. The area to be tattooed was pierced with a porcupine quill coated with charcoal and the needle slowly drawn under the surface so that it left its color behind.[14] Only a limited quantity of tattooing went on during a single sitting, with the result that the process continued over several months. A skilled practitioner "knew the depth of the skin and didn't hurt the other fellow." Designs consisted of short parallel lines applied on the upper surfaces of both arms. Here a man would have his war record embellished. Circumcision was unknown.

291 *Dease River Kaska.* Tanned caribou skin provided the principal source of clothing, supplemented in winter by fox, marten, and other pelts. Sewing was with an awl that punched "holes through which lines were passed to keep shirts and pants together." Women also utilized thimbles of semi-tanned skin when sewing with a needle. Clothes not currently in use were stored in a two-foot long clothing bag of tanned skin.

A man's basic dress consisted of a long-sleeved coat, open in front and tied at the neck. A breech cloth, looped over an inner belt, covered the genitals. The same belt also supported trousers reaching from ankle to the middle of the thigh. Strips of tanned skin ("garters") connected the outside of these leggings to the belt. Only relatively recently, [177] according to an informant, did the Dease River people borrow moccasin and trouser combinations from the Taku Indians. A woman did not use a coat but was attired in a dress that closed in front and extended to about the middle of the calf. She too wore leggings, fastened to an inner belt that also held up the customary breech cloth. Moccasins completed the woman's basic attire.

[13] Uncut hair was customary among the Tlingit. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 189.

[14] "Prick" tattooing is specified for the Tlingit. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 190, 261.

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Upper Liard

of a child (first born?) with a meal to which friends were invited. The first game killed by a youth also became the occasion for a "party." A wealthy man honored his daughter in the same way when she attained menarche or married. Marriage feasts often constituted potlatches, at which the bride's mother aided by her brothers and sisters presented gifts of manufactured objects to the members of the opposite matrilineal moiety. While no elaborate death feast took place a memorial potlatch followed about a year after the death.[30] In winter people enjoyed the Biggest Cache Feast, presented by a man who owned a particularly rich meat cache. Huge quantities of cooked ground hog and gopher and birch-bark dishes filled with grease were served to the guests. Perhaps serving as a hint for someone to provide lavish entertainment, members of the Crow moiety occasionally arranged a mock feast. When the invited guests assembled they found very little food available, "just a bite for everybody." Amused, the guests exclaimed, "A Wolverine Party!" One moiety or the other would then usually announce a more satisfying repast.

The origin of the potlatch is explained in the following tale.

A girl was pregnant. When she was ready to have her baby she went into seclusion behind the dwelling. Here one day as the sun was setting her father heard her talking and laughing. The people did not know that she had given birth to a monster. The girl returned to her parents but the monster grew large and ate many people. He was almost a hundred feet long and had a great, wide mouth. Everybody wanted to kill the thing but nobody was able to do so. One day the people sent the girl away. That is when they killed the monster. When the mother returned she cried like hell because this had been her child. The girl cried so much that the old man became frightened. So the old man made a big potlatch and gave away many things. Pretty soon the girl felt better. Since then the Indians had a potlatch everytime somebody died.

To prepare a potlatch a host first had to secure sufficient quantity of manufactured goods and food that could be distributed. While some of the objects came from members of the donor's matrilineal moiety and need not be repaid, the responsibility for some of the contributions rested with the potlatcher and his family. The distribution of many fine things and large amounts of food won prestige for a man. From such behavior he won the reputation of being a "big man." But only a very capable hunter could acquire enough meat and skins to provide an elaborate give-away. Previous to the party the assembled wealth lay displayed in the dwelling on a mat of rawhide or a bear skin. The potlatcher then proceeded to invite his guests, all members of the opposite moiety. A small ceremony was attached to the invitation. The host, visiting a guest's home, planted his walking stick inside the entry and uttered the syllable, "nix!"[31] The visitors assembled in the potlatch house where brothers and sisters of the potlatcher served them food. After they had finished eating the host distributed gifts through his assistants. There occurred much joking at this stage of the proceedings. For example, a server, following the typical Athapaskan pattern of humor, would pretend to throw a visitor's present

[30] See below, p. 139, for details of a "small" death feast.

[31] Messenger sticks have been described for the Nunivak Eskimo. Here they were used by the message carrier who invited people to a social climbing feast. (Lantis, *Social Culture of the Nunivak Eskimo* [1946], 188.) The distribution of similar insignia among the Eskimo of Alaska is discussed in the same writer's *Alaskan Eskimo Ceremonialism* [1947], 69–72.) The trait is not mentioned in Drucker's check list of the Pacific Coast. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950).

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766 The bodies of men who had died in warfare remained where they had fallen. Abandonment of a corpse also occurred when starvation killed many people and left the survivors too weak (and too few?) to undertake disposal of the corpse.

One informant (X), who had been born in the Fort Simpson area, spoke of tree burial. His reference may have been to customs prevailing there. The same man denied cremation for the "Kaska," saying that the practice had been confined to the Tahltan.[46] For tree burial an ordinary platform cache was constructed between three or four trees. The unflexed corpse, wrapped in a skin, was lifted to the stage and left there. The disposal of bodies on elevated caches was unusual according to our principal upper Liard River informant (O). He knew of one case where a man had specifically asked for such treatment and people granted his request. For an orphaned baby people sometimes constructed a diminutive spruce-bark canoe in which they placed the live child wrapped in blankets. Then they launched the vessel. This pattern of canoe "burial" occurred only when nobody could rear the small orphan. Tradition says that once a child survived its voyage to be reared by a beaver, from whose teats it nursed.

765 Following disposal of the corpse the close relatives of the deceased, including siblings, sons, daughters, and spouses, cut their hair to about the length customary in American society. A person of the opposite group did the cutting. Sometimes a parent detached a finger at the death of a child or an old woman might pound her chest with a stone following a grandchild's departure. Mutilation tended to be rare, however. Relatives also covered themselves with ashes or blackened their faces with charcoal to advertise their anguish. "For about a year" after the loss of her husband a widow refrained from washing.[47] Women led the wailing at death and continued the practice periodically for several months or a year. Sunrise and sunset constituted favorite times for wailing. Widows and widowers passed the year abstaining from porcupine and beaver meat. They might die if they broke this avoidance. To prevent the loss of additional children a bereaved mother lost little time before she resumed sewing and cutting with knife or ax. As already explained, a widow remained in control of her brother-in-law, who had to consent before she could take a new spouse. Generally a widow avoided remarriage or cohabitation for one or two years lest the husband's ghost claim her out of pique.

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send him back to earth, and leave him there until such time as he thinks he has punished him enough when he will be taken back and he will be received with the same honor as a good Indian." Field, *Unpublished manuscript* (1913), 11-12.

Among the Tlingit articles of clothing and bedding were interred with the deceased along with a vessel of water. A death feast was celebrated in honor of the dead and to feed his spirit as it travels "and to pay off all who have any claim on the family of the deceased for any services rendered in their bereavement." Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* (1914), 149. Swanton refers to feasts following cremation in his *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 431.

[46] Tahltan warriors who had died in a foreign country might be cremated where they had fallen and the bones then transported back home.

[47] "Widows paint their faces black as a sign of mourning . . . sometimes the living shaved their heads as a sign of mourning, and widows cut their hair." Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* (1914), 152. Cf. Swanton, *Social Conditions, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 429-430.

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Dease River
Tsalona
Frances Lake

764 Everyone in camp assembled when death seemed inevitable. Long ago bodies were
765 disposed of by cremation and the Tahltan continued the custom a long time after the
Dease River people began to inter their dead in the ground. Coffins as well as any form
768 of tree burial were denied. Members of the opposite moiety handled the corpse. Mourning rites included hair cutting but not mutilation. The dwelling in which death had taken place as well as most of the possessions left by the deceased came to an end by destruction, a practice designed to avoid illness.

761 *Tselona.* Death followed when the wind deserted the body and journeyed to an
764 afterworld about which the informant knew little. The corpse was cremated and the
765 bones intered in a small pit about one foot deep. Anyone who had handled the corpse
768 avoided food and drink for two days but no particular relatives were charged with this responsibility. Elevated cache and canoe burials could not be recalled. In mourning a widow cut short her hair, fasted for several days, and wore ragged clothing. At night she slept little, deliberateiy keeping herself awake by means of sharp sticks planted under her head. Her plans for remarriage demanded the approval of her brother-in-law
[304] or he might wed her himself. Scarification, face blackening, and hair singeing were denied. A widower observed food and drink taboos but did not cut his hair.

Property destruction following death was denied.

774 *Frances Lake Kaska.* A person's wind or soul, located in the stomach, resembled the
761 breath or the air that one inhaled. Just as breathing sustained life the loss of the wind
775 (breath) produced death. The informant denied that there could be a temporary alienation of body and wind. The soul continued to survive after quitting the body and if it had belonged to a good man became reincarnated. Following death the ghost (tsune), which was always dangerous, remained in the neighborhood for a period ranging from ten days to a year. During this time it hunted, copulated with women, visited its birthplace, and completed any tasks that the deceased throughout his life had left uncompleted. In appearance the ghost resembled a living Indian but could only be seen and not sensed tactually. Ghosts also avenged themselves for injuries that had been sustained in life. To announce themselves they sometimes whistled. Knocking did not constitute a ghostly signature.

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rather cool, dingy place underground to the west; a light agreeable place on the same level as the earth to the east; and a place above in the sky. Only people killed in battle go to the last. Sometimes they come out, and dance as the aurora. When the latter consist of red clouds, people say there is a war somewhere. When the streamers of the aurora descend, forming a kind of chute, it is said that the spirits are receiving a brave warrior whose soul ascends through this chute, and is borne away as the streamers ascend. The sky heaven is said to be the best abode. That to the east is somewhat like this earth, but better in so far as food is always abundant. Most people go to it. They have to descend a slippery hill, and cross a river. Some are afraid, and turn back to be reborn again, or wander about until they reach the place of shades in the west where conditions are not as good as in the other places, and food is often scarce. Teit, *Ou Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work* (1917), 486. Cf. Speck, *Naskapi* (1935), 51, who also speaks of the dead appearing in the northern lights.